

## **Best Practices for Women-Owned Small Businesses**

The following “Best Practices” have been gathered by the U.S. Small Business Administration’s (SBA) Office of Federal Contract Assistance for Women Business Owners (CAWBO). These are offered to help meet and exceed the five percent prime and subcontracting goals for Women-Owned Small Businesses (WOSBs). We thank our colleagues, the Women’s Advocates in the Offices of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBUs), for many of these Best Practices. The Best Practices are divided into two major areas, Training and Outreach. Some resources, such as [www.womenbiz.gov](http://www.womenbiz.gov), provide assistance in both categories.

### **TRAINING**

The following are training suggestions for WOSBs wishing to participate more fully in federal procurement. Such training should ideally include establishing a viable business infrastructure, locating contract opportunities, marketing to federal agencies and prime contractors, and enhancing WOSB legal and financial knowledge about federal prime and subcontracts.

#### **Mentor-Protégé Programs**

A number of federal agencies and large federal contractors sponsor Mentor Protégé (MP) programs for small or small disadvantaged businesses, including WOSBs. A primary objective of the MP programs is to increase WOSB federal subcontracting opportunities through the mentors, and to prepare WOSBs to win and perform federal prime contracts. A second major objective is to provide participating protégés the opportunity to learn through their mentors the best ways to grow a successful business. The Department of the Treasury maintains a list of all federally sponsored mentor protégé programs on its website, <http://www.ustreas.gov/sba>, under the link “Mentor Protégé Activities”.

#### **On-Line Training and Opportunities**

A major tool already being used by many WOSBs and WOSB advocates is [www.womenbiz.gov](http://www.womenbiz.gov). This website, developed at SBA by the National Women’s Business Council and CAWBO in conjunction with other federal agencies, offers both the novice and the seasoned WOSB extensive and essential federal procurement information. The site includes over 100 procurement links. It also provides WOSBs the opportunity to register for PRO-Net, the Department of Defense’s (DoD) Central Contractor Registry (CCR), and other important procurement databases. The first two can also be found by going directly to [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov), and scrolling down to SBA’s PRO-Net logo, or entering [www.pro-net.sba.gov](http://www.pro-net.sba.gov). Some of the links are to agencies which offer agency-specific information about their procurement programs and opportunities. SBA offers information about its programs at [www.sba.gov/services/](http://www.sba.gov/services/) and at its homepage, [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov). Basic business information and small business procurement information are provided at [www.sba.gov/classroom/](http://www.sba.gov/classroom/). Specific SBA business training events can be found by state at [www.sba.gov/calendar/](http://www.sba.gov/calendar/). Additional on-line training about a number of federal small business programs is provided through the Federal

Acquisition Institute. Firms may register through [www.faionline.com](http://www.faionline.com) to review the available modules.

A very important technical site for information about federal contracting and subcontracting practices is [www.arnet.gov/far](http://www.arnet.gov/far), which includes the most current version of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). The organization of the FAR, by Subchapters and “Parts,” is given in Part One of the 53 Parts. A number of agencies have additional, agency specific regulations. For example, DoD procurements are also subject to the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS), found at <http://farsite.hill.af.mil>; (do not insert “www”). The FAR and its supplements are the primary guidance used by federal procurement personnel in preparing solicitations, invitations for bids and contracts. Familiarity with the FAR and any appropriate agency supplements, plus any agency specific contracting procedures, is strongly suggested.

### **Procurement Counseling**

The OSDBUs of the large federal agencies are able to provide one-on-one counseling to small businesses, and almost all have a WOSB advocate. The Air Force WOSB advocate is one of several OSDBU WOSB advocates who make a special effort to counsel a number of WOSBs each week. In addition, there are numerous resources in every state to assist WOSBs in starting and growing their businesses. Most are low-cost, some are free, and many assist small businesses in preparing for federal prime and subcontracting. A number of these resources can be found, listed by state, at [www.womenbiz.gov](http://www.womenbiz.gov), by clicking on “Getting Started”, then “State Small Business Resource Guide”. These resources include, in part, all SBA district offices, their Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) chapters, and SBA Procurement Center Representatives (PCRs) and Commercial Market Representatives (CMRs). The small business resources under “Getting Started” also include information on Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), Women’s Business Centers (WBCs), U.S. Export Assistance Centers (USEACs), many state Chambers of Commerce, and state financial assistance centers. In addition, the guide includes the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACS) which are operated by DoD specifically to help small businesses prepare for federal procurement.

### **Courses on Federal Contracting**

NASA is one agency that currently provides substantive training through several different courses and other opportunities. Much of this training is reserved for women and minority small businesses in high-tech industries. The TADSBAT (Training & Development for Small Businesses in Advanced Technologies) course is presented at both a basic and an advanced level, and lasts several days. These courses are conducted several times a year by NASA’s trainers. Some of the training modules assist small businesses with marketing, financing, proposal preparation, and safety-quality management of the product or service. Participants are required to fund their own transportation, lodging and meals. See: <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codek.htm> for more information on TADSBAT, plus other training and assistance offered by NASA’s Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization. The phone number for NASA’s Woman’s Advocate is 202-358-2088. SBA offers training about the 8(a)

program at regular intervals, usually one-half day in length, through its district offices. Information on loans and other SBA programs is also available through its district offices.

Many small business courses are also often available at local universities or other educational institutions.

### **Conference Training**

Almost all federal agencies and many federal prime contractors hold or participate in small business conferences and training events. DoD, SBA, EPA, HUD, Interior and several other agencies hold conferences or other events specifically for WOSBs, while more include training sessions devoted to WOSBs. Each year in the Washington area, usually in April, the excellent and affordable one-day OSDBU small business conference is sponsored and presented by all the federal OSDBUs, under the leadership of the Department of the Treasury's OSDBU personnel. This conference allows small businesses to talk in one day with personnel from a number of OSDBUs plus a number of federal prime contractor representatives. A Best Practice for a small business is to contact personnel in the OSDBUs of the agencies with the buying activities to which the small business would like to market. These OSDBU personnel should be able to provide information on most upcoming area small business conferences.

### **Federal Assistance with Business and Contracting Finance**

Information about all of SBA's financing programs for small business is available through the Agency's website, at [www.sba.gov/financing/](http://www.sba.gov/financing/). SBA district offices serve as a direct source of information and assistance concerning these programs, and can familiarize applicants with participating lenders. The majority of this financing assistance is provided through loans guaranteed by the SBA. However, the loans are actually made by the participating banks and community development companies (CDCs) which make financing available to customers who might not qualify through normal lending channels. There are basically two types of SBA guaranteed loans available to borrowers: the 7(a) Loan Guaranty Program and the 504 Certified Development Company Loan Program. In addition, SBA offers the 7(m) MicroLoan Program. Equity investment is available through the Small Business Investment Company Program. A brief description of some of SBA's lending programs follows:

#### **7 (a) Loan Guaranty Program**

SBA may guarantee loans to small businesses that cannot obtain financing on reasonable terms through normal lending channels. Specialized loan programs are available under the 7(a) program. Some are useful for contract financing, particularly the CAPLines Program. Others are the Low Documentation Loan Program, the SBAExpress Program, the SBA Loan Prequalification Program, and the International Trade Loan Program -- discussed below -- plus several more.

### CAPLines

CAPLines is the 7(a) umbrella program under which the SBA helps small businesses meet their short-term and cyclical working-capital needs. SBA can generally guarantee loans of up to \$1 million, with a maximum interest rate for loans over \$50,000 of prime + 2.25%. Total loan amounts may be as high as \$2 million. One of the five short-term working-capital loan programs for small businesses under the CAPLines umbrella is the Contract Line, which may be used to finance the direct labor and material costs associated with performing assignable contracts. The loan may be revolving or non-revolving. Due to the flexibility of the Contract Line, it is appropriate for indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity and cost reimbursement contracts as well as fixed price contracts. It may also be used for private sector contract financing.

### SBAExpress:

Under the SBAExpress Program, another 7(a) loan, a limited number of lenders have SBA-delegated authority to streamline loan approval, and primarily use their own paperwork. Loans may not exceed \$250,000, and may be used for revolving credit or for a term loan. This program may be an option for contract financing. It should also be considered when financing subcontract requirements. The period of the loan is no more than five years for a revolving line of credit, up to ten years for working capital, and can extend up to 25 years for fixed assets and real estate.

### Low Documentation Loan Program

A "Low Doc" loan reduces the paperwork currently involved in 7(a) loan requests. The current limit is \$150,000. The SBA portion of this application is one page.

### SBA Prequalification Pilot Loan Program

This program is designed to address markets identified by SBA as underserved via traditional lending programs. These markets include WOSBs. Applicants are assisted in preparing loan applications by intermediaries, who can be located through the nearest SBA district office. The intermediaries may charge a fee for some or all of their services. SBA issues prequalification letters to successful applicants, based in part on the applicant's character and credit history. These expedite lenders' decisions. The maximum loan amount is \$250,000, with a flexible term. The loan interest rate can be fixed or variable, and is negotiable with the lender. Loan maturity is usually five to ten years, but may extend to 25 years for fixed asset loans.

### The International Trade Loan Program

Under this program, small businesses engaged in or ready to begin international trade – or adversely affected by competition from imports – may qualify for short or long term financing. The SBA can guarantee up to \$1.25 million for a combination of fixed asset financing and Export Working Capital Program assistance.

### 7(m) MicroLoan Program

This is a program in which short-term loans of up to \$35,000 are made by nonprofit community- based lenders (intermediaries) to start-up, newly established, or growing small businesses concerns.



#### 504 Certified Development Company Loans

Certified Development Companies (CDCs) are nonprofit corporations set up to contribute to the economic development of their communities. The CDCs partnering with SBA provide small businesses long-term, fixed-rate financing to acquire real estate, machinery and equipment for business expansion or to modernize facilities. The SBA will guarantee debentures funding CDC assistance up to \$1 million, which may not exceed forty percent of the project cost. An SBA guarantee of up to \$1.3 million is possible for loans which meet stated public policy goals. (See [www.sba.gov/financing](http://www.sba.gov/financing), and click on “CDC – 504 Loans” for more information.) Recipient small businesses must contribute a minimum of ten percent equity as part of the loan package. The private lender’s portion of these loans is unlimited. These loans are only available through CDCs and must create at least one job per every \$35,000 loaned under SBA’s guarantee.

#### Department of Transportation (DOT) Short Term Lending Program (STLP)

This DOT STLP financing is available to firms DOT has certified as Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), including Women-Owned Business Enterprises (WBEs) – and to 8(a), HUBZone, Small Disadvantaged Business, or Service Disabled Veteran-Owned firms. The firm must be in business three years to qualify. DOT provides guarantees for these loans which are made through participating banks. Loans are available, up to \$500,000, for transportation-related contracts, at a rate of prime plus one percent. STLP financing can be used for any public, commercial, federal, state, or local agency contract – for any of the nation’s transportation modes. See information and contacts at <http://osdbuweb.dot.gov/about/index.html>.

#### Equity Investments: The Small Business Investment Company Program

Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs), licensed and regulated by the SBA, make venture capital investments with their own funds plus funds obtained through SBA participation. The incentive for SBICs is to share in the success of the funded small business as it grows and prospers. The SBA publishes a regularly updated directory of all current SBIC licensees. It is available at [www.sba.gov/inv](http://www.sba.gov/inv).

More information is available through SBA district offices in all 50 states and Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam. Locations and phone numbers are available on this website at <http://www.sba.gov/regions/states.html>. They may also be found under “U.S. Government” in telephone directories, or are available through 1-800 U ASK SBA; TDD: 1-704 344-6640 – or by e-mail: [answerdesk@sba.gov](mailto:answerdesk@sba.gov). Women business owners may consult the SBA On-line Women’s Business Center for assistance at <http://www.onlinewbc.gov>. In addition to program specific information at SBA’s website at [www.sba.gov/financing](http://www.sba.gov/financing), SBA also provides its publications online. To access these, enter [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov), click on “Online Library”, then on “Publications”, and scroll down to the tables at the bottom. Please note the table entitled “Publications – Guides”, which includes a “Borrower’s Guide”.

## **PROCUREMENT OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOSBs**

One of the biggest challenges for any small business is reaching its clients. The following are a few time-tested ways of connecting with potential clients.

### **Go to the Small Business Specialists**

Contact information for most of the Offices of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBUs), which assist small businesses, can be accessed through [www.womenbiz.gov](http://www.womenbiz.gov), by clicking on "Key Contacts." After determining which agencies are their most likely customers, WOSBs can check the respective OSDBU websites. A number have extensive information on-line for potential contractors. Further, WOSBs may call OSDBUs to see whether their staffs take appointments or use other methods to help small businesses find procurement opportunities. In addition, there are usually small business representatives on the procurement staffs of most federal buying activities. Questions about upcoming opportunities and agency procurement practices may be addressed to these small business advocates. These advocates may be the best source for names and numbers of program managers who need a given service or product. OSDBU staffs may be able to provide telephone numbers or e-mail addresses for these advocates.

### **Be Available!**

#### **PRO-Net and the Central Contractor Registry**

PRO-Net is SBA's free on-line database of small businesses. It is searched by contracting officers and prime contractors seeking small businesses in particular industries and locations, often by the type of ownership, e.g., WOSB. It is an excellent, free marketing tool for WOSBs to gain instant and wide exposure to the federal contracting community. A firm may self-certify that it is small and woman-owned (meaning that one or more women have at least 51 percent of the ownership and the control of the firm.) A firm may also provide information about the services or supplies it provides, plus a listing of awards or other favorable past performance information. To provide the required information in these databases, firms may first research the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code(s) for their products or services by accessing at [www.census.gov/naics](http://www.census.gov/naics). The correct NAICS code(s) are essential for registration in PRO-Net and for certain contracting requirements.

Registration in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) is required to participate in Department of Defense (DoD) procurements. Therefore, prospective DoD contractors must register in the CCR. Beginning in the fall of 2003, payment by any federal agency will require registration in CCR.

Any small business seeking federal contracts or subcontracts should register at [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov). A DUNS number, a CAGE code and yearly updates by each registrant will be required. Registration by small businesses in the CCR provides an opportunity to register in PRO-Net. PRO-Net can also be accessed at [www.pro-net.sba.gov](http://www.pro-net.sba.gov). Both websites may be accessed through [www.womenbiz.gov](http://www.womenbiz.gov).



## **Marketing to Specific Federal Agencies**

After deciding which agency or agencies represent the best markets, obtaining more specific information is critical. The websites and other sources provided above should help in finding the websites, forecasts, lists of agency small business specialists, and access to the Offices of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization of most agencies. However, due to the volume and dollar value of their procurements, two agencies, the General Services Administration (GSA) and DoD, are discussed here in more detail.

### **The General Services Administration (GSA)**

GSA is the major civilian agency that buys for the federal government, with ten Business Service Center Regional Offices around the country offering assistance. Firms interested in GSA contracts should contact the [GSA Office of Enterprise Development](#) or call the GSA Federal Consumer Information Center weekdays between 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. eastern time. The toll-free number is (800) 688-9889; TDD: (800) 326-2996. GSA also manages the Federal Supply Schedules Program. Federal Supply Schedules, often referred to by the abbreviation FSS, are indefinite quantity contracts that allow federal agencies to order commercial products and services from approved vendors. Federal procurement personnel can purchase a product or service by using the price lists of several competitors listed on a particular schedule. Information is available at <http://www.fss.gsa.gov>. GSA provides training sessions about applying for an FSS contract.

### **Federal Business Opportunities**

**[www.fedbizopps.gov](http://www.fedbizopps.gov)**

GSA also manages [www.fedbizopps.gov/](http://www.fedbizopps.gov/) the single entry point for announcements of federal procurement opportunities. There is a search engine at this website, and WOSBs can register for notices of opportunities in their own industries.

### **The GSA SmartPay Purchase Card**

This card, available through banks which have an agreement with GSA to service the card, provides an excellent way to get started with federal procurement. More than 250,000 federal Government employees are using the GSASmartPay purchase card, which is the preferred government method of payment. Therefore, all small businesses, including WOSBs, should be ready to accept one or more of the four cards under this program in order to increase contracting opportunities. Accepting all four cards will maximize these opportunities. For more information, visit GSA's website at <http://pub.fss.gsa.gov/services/gsa-smartpay>, or call (703) 305-6658.

### **The Department of Defense (DoD)**

The Department of Defense (DoD) spends over sixty percent of the total federal procurement budget and provides approximately fifty percent of all federal contract dollars that are awarded to WOSBs. As stated earlier, small businesses may register in both the Central Contractor Registry and PRO-Net through the CCR Web Site: [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov), and for the latter only, at [www.pro-net.sba.gov](http://www.pro-net.sba.gov). Potential contractors must obtain a DUNS Number. It is helpful to know the DoD Federal Supply Class or



Product Service (FSC/PSC) Code ([www.dlis.dla.mil/h2](http://www.dlis.dla.mil/h2)) and, as with other agencies, the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code ([www.census.gov/naics](http://www.census.gov/naics)) for the product or service being marketed. Researching the DoD contracting procedures is recommended. As noted above, the FAR is available at [www.arnet.gov/far](http://www.arnet.gov/far). The DFARS (supplement) is on the web at [www.acq.osd.mil/dp/dars](http://www.acq.osd.mil/dp/dars).

On the DoD website, [web1.whs.osd.mil](http://web1.whs.osd.mil), the products and services purchased by DoD within a given fiscal year are listed. Data are sorted by the Federal Supply Center and purchasing code. The name and location of the DoD activities that purchased each commodity or service are provided. The ST28 report is located under “Procurement” and “statistics” and is the last report on the web page. These can be cross-referenced with the list of Small Business Specialists at [www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/publications/sbs/sbs.html](http://www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/publications/sbs/sbs.html) to identify points of contact for each target activity. The list of DoD buying activities, under “Selling to the Military,” is also located at <http://www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu>, as are links to the DoD Procurement Forecasts. Current procurement opportunities are available at the DoD Business Opportunities website, [www.dodbusopps.com](http://www.dodbusopps.com). Other DoD resources include the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs) found in most states, which advise small businesses about contracting with DoD. See [www.dla.mil/db/pta](http://www.dla.mil/db/pta). Electronic business (eBusiness), located at [www.defenselink.mil/acq/ebusiness](http://www.defenselink.mil/acq/ebusiness), provides assistance on getting started in the electronic marketplace. Also check the DefenseLink website at [www.defenselink.mil](http://www.defenselink.mil), which provides links to the homepages of every DoD activity. Many DoD purchases are orders against Federal Supply Schedules, so WOSBs providing goods or services in categories which are available through FSS(s) should make the effort to include their firms on the appropriate schedules. WOSBs should contact those DoD buying activities that are potential customers and request specific information about doing business with those activities.

For special requirements to work with other federal agencies, first check their websites (through “Getting Started”, at [www.womenbiz.gov](http://www.womenbiz.gov)) for procurement information, then ask the OSDDBU personnel or small business procurement representatives what registrations and other steps are needed prior to competing for their contracts.

### **Certification**

At this time there is no certification procedure *required* for women-owned businesses for Federal procurement. WOSBs may self-certify for procurements, and may register as WOSBs in PRO-Net. However, some prime contractors do require third-party certification. There are two private, national women’s business organizations that certify qualified women-owned businesses. One of these is the Women’s Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC). See <http://wbenc.org>, or call 202-872-5515. A second is the National Women’s Business Owners Corporation (NWBOC). See <http://www.nwbo.org>. Call the NWBOC at 561-881-7364. Each organization has an extensive list of large corporations that accept its certification. Each charges a yearly fee for its certification.

In addition, there are also several federal certification programs. WOSBs *may* qualify for three of these programs which are currently offered by the SBA and one which is offered by the Department of Transportation. SBA's certification programs are the 8(a) Program, the Small Disadvantaged Business Program, and the HUBZone Program. Details of certification requirements and procedures for all four programs are given at [www.womenbiz.gov/certifications](http://www.womenbiz.gov/certifications) and (for SBA's programs) at SBA's home page, under [www.sba.gov/8abd/](http://www.sba.gov/8abd/) and [www.sba.gov/hubzone/](http://www.sba.gov/hubzone/). These federal programs provide additional access to federal contracts. Certification in two of the programs, the 8(a) Program and the HUBZone Program, provides an opportunity to be considered for sole-source contracts.

### **Conferences**

In addition to training, conferences provide WOSBs a great opportunity to network with agency representatives and prime contractors. In addition to those already mentioned, a number of other agencies hold WOSB conferences at least yearly. Three agencies, Interior, Commerce and Agriculture, team with the Business Women's Network (BWN) to produce conferences that focus on women-owned businesses. Interior's "Global Summit" conference is very large, with both networking and training opportunities for WOSBs. The Interior OSDBU staff also travel to participate in many small business conferences around the country. See: [www.doi.gov/osdbu](http://www.doi.gov/osdbu). Commerce works through its International Trade Administration with BWN to highlight women-owned procurement opportunities. See: [www.osec.doc.gov/osdbu](http://www.osec.doc.gov/osdbu). In addition, Agriculture holds two outreach sessions each year for WOSB, including teaming with BWN. See: [www.usda.gov/osdbu](http://www.usda.gov/osdbu). Some of the events in which SBA participates are available at <http://app1.sba.gov/calendar/nationwide/EvntGrp1.cfm>.

### **Meet the Customer**

"Matchmaking": SBA and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce are cosponsoring a series of matchmaking sessions around the country. The results have been positive for small businesses, which so often cannot "get to" program managers or the right contracting personnel. These events allow small business owners to present their qualifications to representatives from government buying activities and prime contractors to the government. Locations and dates are available at <http://www.uschamber.com/events/matchmaking/default>.

The Treasury OSDBU has pioneered the monthly Vendor Outreach Session (VOS), in which small businesses, including WOSBs, have an opportunity to meet with program managers or other invited guests, including prime contractors for pre-scheduled 15 minute sessions. Treasury hosts an Information Technology (IT) Vendor Outreach Session twice a year in which small businesses can meet with IT program managers. For all these Outreach sessions, Treasury has small businesses send in e-mail requests in advance, and has "grown" this successful program since 1995. The March VOS is reserved for WOSBs. See: [www.treas.gov/sba/vos.html](http://www.treas.gov/sba/vos.html).

Several OSDBUs have provided small businesses exposure to clients who have upcoming procurements or subcontracts. NASA hosts half-day sessions for minority

businesses and WOSBs, in both the aero and science industries. During these sessions several pre-selected firms are provided about 20 minutes each to present capabilities, and then are given a scheduled period for questions and answers from the attending program managers and prime contractors. These sessions are rotated among the 10 NASA Centers. Contact the NASA OSDBU at [www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codek](http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codek) for the next sessions and locations.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) holds monthly outreach events which provide about 40 small businesses an opportunity first for an overview of the agency's procurement needs, then a chance for these businesses to network with program managers from various HHS operating divisions. See: [www.hhs.gov/osdbu](http://www.hhs.gov/osdbu); there is also a link to more information for WOSBs.

Interior makes a special effort to link individual WOSBs to program managers with opportunities in their industries. See: [www.doi.gov/osdbu](http://www.doi.gov/osdbu). Transportation, at <http://osdbuweb.dot.gov>; 202-366-1930, and Commerce, at [www.osec.doc.gov/osdbu](http://www.osec.doc.gov/osdbu); 202-482-1472, both hold small business matchmaking events.

### **Subcontracting**

Government subcontracts provide a large number of marketing opportunities for small businesses. In FY 2001, small business subcontracting awards totaled \$35,548,550,091. Federal prime contractors--particularly those that service the Department of Defense and NASA--emphasize subcontracting to WOSBs, veteran-owned, and minority businesses. SBA's Subcontracting Opportunities Directory, <http://www.sba.gov/GC/contacts.html>, lists contacts for many of these large firms, as does [www.womenbiz.gov](http://www.womenbiz.gov).

The Womenbiz.gov web site also lists SBA Government Contracting staff, including Procurement Center Representatives (PCRs), who assist small businesses in identifying contracts at Federal buying offices, and Commercial Market Representatives (CMRs), who assist in marketing to federal buying activities and their prime contractors. Through PRO-Net's website at [www.pronet.sba.gov/](http://www.pronet.sba.gov/), WOSBs may also search the new SBA SUB-Net Program (part of PRO-Net) for subcontract opportunities at <http://web.sba.gov/subnet/> and sign up for federal and other subcontracting notices of opportunities that are continually updated there.

"Subcontracting Opportunities with DoD Prime Contractors", at [www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/publications/subdir/index.html](http://www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/publications/subdir/index.html), lists all major DoD prime contractors by state and provides a point of contact for each firm. Due to the large volume and dollar value of DoD subcontracting opportunities, this site is very useful.

Contractor websites will have information under "Small Business Liaison Officer" (SBLO) or "Supplier Diversity Program" for their subcontracting offices. Further, WOSBs are encouraged to contact the prime contractors' Small Business Liaison Offices or Supplier Diversity Program offices, and provide a capabilities statement and a record of the firm's past performance. One side benefit is the additional teaming

opportunities being produced. However, it is usually wise to review a firm's website information prior to speaking with a staff member.

## **Other Procurement Information**

### **Department of the Treasury OSDBU**

The Department of the Treasury OSDBU has published a document entitled "Targeted Outreach Program," which lists, by industry code and dollar amount, (1) the top 25 areas in which Treasury spends its money and (2) how the dollars spent are distributed among the various small business entities, including WOSBs. See: [www.treas.gov/sba/](http://www.treas.gov/sba/).

### **NASA OSDBU**

The NASA OSDBU has highlighted -- on-line and in a booklet -- its IT procurement opportunities. As *the* industry in which small businesses most often seek NASA contracts, a NASA OSDBU staff member regularly contacts each of NASA's 10 centers for the latest IT procurement information and then updates it in both formats for small businesses. Check [www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codek/](http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/codek/) for the IT website.

### **Naval Sea Command**

The Naval Sea Command (NAVSEA) has provided an innovative example of how WOSBs can be included in a major DoD procurement. Recognizing that women-owned businesses constitute the most underrepresented contracting segment within federal procurement goals, the Deputy Program Manager of the Virginia Class Submarine Program determined that the next procurement, worth billions of dollars, would address this problem. He included contract incentives for the already chosen primes to meet or exceed FAR WOB goals. Then he spearheaded "Making the Connection", a conference in which 130 people, representing 90 businesses, were invited in the fall of 2001 to meet with the primes, network with each other and to learn more about federal procurement. The event was so successful that another event featuring other opportunities was planned by Team Submarine in 2002. See [www.wobconference.com](http://www.wobconference.com) for more information.

### **Air Force**

The Air Force uses an "interactive electronic shopping mall" to allow small businesses to access information on many subjects. See [www.selltoairforce.org/](http://www.selltoairforce.org/), and visit [www.miairforce.org/](http://www.miairforce.org/). Additional information for small businesses is available at [www.airforceoutreach.org/](http://www.airforceoutreach.org/).